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LITERARY NOTES.

FROM the fogs of London, from the city of gold and iron, and brick and smoke, there reaches us month by month, a most refreshing little publication, entitled *The Studio*, which is one of the best exponents of art in England that has ever been published.

*The Studio* is a journal devoted to the consideration and advancement of fine art. It is a journal of appreciation and criticism, viewing art from the standpoint of the studio, and criticising the finished product, without to any extent describing processes or methods. It is an aphorism for the æsthete, an advocate for the amateur, a direction to the dilettante, a voice for the virtuoso, the young David of art student, who has risen to fight the Philistines.

The arts in particular that come under its observation are essentially the decorative arts, such as painting, mural decoration, china painting, pen drawing, embroidery, photography, fine furniture, wood engraving, stained glass, and wall-paper. In its method of treating these subjects it is modest and quietly strong, happily avoiding the conventional routine of journals like the *Art Journal* and the *Magazine of Art*. It is an organ of the cult that despises the Philistine, and must be dear to the heart of the neophyte who poses daily in the robes of art with Delauneyan grace. It is a source of inspiration to the art student in general, and as such, gives a reason for its existence. The illustrations are chiefly half-tone plates, and are triumphs of the engraver's art. The literary matter in the special field it covers is excellent, showing a keen appreciation of what is best in the subject discussed.

A curious sense of deference to the susceptibilities of its readers is shown in the advice by which unpalatable criticism is made under the heading of "The Lay Figure Speaks." The lay figure is the editorial scapegoat, whose tender soul recoils from administering unwelcome rebuke in *propria persona*. The editor, we believe, is Mr. Gleason White, the late assistant editor of the *Art Amateur* of this city, whose privilege it is to cultivate the ideal in an ungrateful soil. Up and down the thoroughfares of Mammon he leads his devoted band of adherents, playing the role of drum major without even a chromo for his breastplate, or having for a banner the rustling amplitude of a working design.

JAPAN IN ART AND INDUSTRY; With Glances at Japanese Manners and Customs. By Félix Régamey, with 100 designs by the author. G. P. Putnam's Sons; the Knickerbocker Press, New York.

This translation of an admirable work on Japan, by the well-known French artist, M. Félix Régamey, ought to be in the possession of every art student in the country. Japanese art work is made a special subject of study by the author, as well as a consideration of the manners and customs of this interesting people. Japanese art is an original and most charming study of nature. The method of study pursued by the artists of Japan is the correct one, for to them nothing is indifferent, and they study and produce

graphic arts of designing, engraving, etc. There are chapters relating to the manners and customs of the Japanese themselves, their food preparation, drinks, smoking, faiths, religion, employment, etc., the book concluding with a short vocabulary of Japanese work, words and phrases, and Japanese works published on Japan and its people.

We learn from our author many curious facts about the Land of the Rising Sun, whose people are as hospitable to strangers as they are to art. They live in an atmosphere of art, the country being, in fact a vast museum of living art. Its people understand how to paint life, that is, their own life, which is no more than that of the Chinese (with whom they are

often confounded) than it is ours. For example, the Chinese love jewelry, whereas the Japanese do not wear any jewelry whatever, and with them necklaces, bracelets, rings and earrings are unknown. Many other curious points of dissimilarity between the Japanese and Chinese are recorded, but the book as a whole is mainly taken up with a masterly consideration of the art and industry of Japan.

THE BOOK OF THE FAIR. By Hubert Howe Bancroft. The Bancroft Company, Publishers, Auditorium Building, Chicago, Ill. Complete in 25 numbers of 40 imperial pages each at \$1.

The world now recognizes the Columbian Exposition as one of the most stupendous of educational influences, especially for the young. Very early in the day its originators and its builders decided to avoid all such sensational features as would merely arouse wonder, without leading to inquiry and improvement of the mind. The choice of the attractions offered by all the nations and peoples of the world, the classification of the exhibits and the work of organization, from first to last, were all guided by this motive, a determination to present a great object lesson to the world in its departments of art, science,

industry, intellect and religion.

But in order that education should derive the greatest advantage from this storehouse of human knowledge, a textbook is necessary, and fortunately there is one work now in process of publication which has clearly earned its title to that distinction, "The Book of the Fair," by Hubert Howe Bancroft.

We have been favored with a representative selection of the various parts already issued, and find the work a complete and perfect history of the Colum-



A PAINTED TAPESTRY. BY J. F. DOUTHITT. (See foregoing page.)

with equal skill and art the behavior of an insect, or the physical character of a man. They do not simply copy nature, their representation being the very opposite of photography, which reproduces a temporary or accidental aspect of a thing, whereas Japanese creative art reproduces the dominant idea of the subject and its ideal grace.

M. Régamey, being himself an artist, writes with enthusiastic admiration of Japanese art in wood, metal, ceramics, textile fabrics, lacquer, and the

## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

bian Exposition, produced by the joint labors of author and artist. It is a veritable Field of the Cloth of Gold, whose graphic and artistic illustrations unweaved with the valuable text that elucidates the pictures makes the 1,000 pages of the work a magnificent souvenir of the wonders of the greatest Exposition the world has ever gazed upon.

The most thorough and elaborate preparations have been made by the publishers to produce what is in the highest and best sense a work of art and of utility, a book that is at once beautiful and useful. The best processes have been adopted and the best artists secured to illustrate the text. We have here, then, the history and description of the entire Exposition by an author of known character and repute, aided and adorned by the most beautiful pictures that can be produced. It is safe to say that in no other form can the great Exposition be so well represented and preserved.

All the prominent and representative features, historical and descriptive, of the grand display, buildings and their contents and surroundings, giving enough of every class of exhibits fully and fitly to represent the whole.

All the prominent exhibits of furniture, porcelains, ceramic wall decorations, cut glass, carpets, rugs, paintings, statuary, wood carving, bronzes, gold and silvermith's work, textile fabrics, mural decoration, tapestry, etc., as well as the thousand other exhibits of every possible phase of industrial art are ably described and illustrated. The work is the most complete and perfect reproduction of the great display that has been made, or that can be made within reasonable limits. The plan of the work, while avoiding too lengthy description, covers the entire ground with sufficient detail, and presents in permanent form all the characteristics of the great Exposition. Nothing better can suit popular requirements than a work of this kind, which covers the whole ground, historical and descriptive, executed in the highest style of art.

**THE POTTERY AND PORCELAIN OF THE UNITED STATES;** an Historical Review of American Ceramic Art, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day; by Edwin Atlee Barber, A. M., Ph.D., with 223 illustrations. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Ceramic art as practised in America has hitherto been without a history, although it is one of the most significant branches of our industrial progress. The need of a history of the industry in America has led to the preparation of the present volume, which possesses great interest to the student of ceramics, as well as to the collector. By means of this remarkable work the author calls attention to the

progress which has been made in ceramic manufacture in our midst, particularly within the past fifteen years. The book is one that will exalt the prestige of American art productions abroad as well as at home, and from a perusal of the volume we are led to conclude, with the author, that America within the next few decades is destined to lead the world in her ceramic manufactures. Hence the value of such a work to the future as well as the present student of the struggles of art in this country.

The author claims that it is not merely a compilation, but that it has been based almost entirely upon thorough personal investigation. This certainly imparts to the work great merit. The book is a complete study of the processes of manufacture and the art values of American wares, ranging from aboriginal pottery and the early Colonial potteries to the artistic productions of the Rookwood Pottery of Cincinnati, and the Low Art Tiles of Chelsea, Mass.

The frontispiece is adorned with a portrait of the author, which is a reproduction of a relief tile block, modeled by Mr. W. W. Gallimore.

Among the articles reproduced, and worthy of note for their beauty of form and decoration, are a couple of vases by Mrs. M. L. Nichols. In bold relief and unglazed color they are at once original in conception, artistic in treatment and bold in execution. There is a lengthy description of the Rookwood Ceramic establishment, established by Mrs. M. L. Nichols, in the suburbs of the City of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The ware produced at Rookwood is a true faience, classed under three heads: The cameo or shell-tinted ware, the dull-finished ware, and most characteristic of all the richly-glazed Rookwood faience. The distinguishing features of all these varieties is the tinting and harmonious blending of the grounds beneath the heavy transparent-colored glaze, producing tints of great brilliancy, mellowness, depth and strength. There is shown a group of Rookwood vases, combining great beauty of form, with great lustre and glaze. As the author says: the history of Rookwood, from its inception, cannot fail to have a peculiar interest for American collectors and patrons of art. The Rookwood pottery was the first in this country to demonstrate the fact that a purely American art product in which original design and conscientious work is made paramount to commercial considerations, can command the appreciation of the American public.

Considerable space is also given to a description of the useful and beautiful porcelain wares of the Chesapeake Pottery, of Baltimore, Md. Among the youngest of American potteries, it has achieved a high reputation for the variety of excellent and novel

bodies and glazes it has produced, and has won still greater distinction by the beauty and originality of its designs, both in form and decoration. There are illustrations given of toilet wares, vases, lamps, clocks, etc.

Mention is also made of the Lotus ware of Knowles, Taylor & Knowles, of East Liverpool, O., the celebrated Royal Blue Porcelain of the International Pottery Co., of Trenton, N. J., and of the fine opaque china decorated toilet, dinner and tea sets and colored glass jardinières of the Edwin Bennett Pottery Co., of Baltimore, Md.

Mr. Barber does not omit a consideration of one manufacture of clay pipes and of ornamental tiles produced by the Low Art Tile Co., of Chelsea, Mass.; the American Encaustic Tiling Co., of Zanesville, Ohio, and the Beaver Falls Art Tile Co., of Beaver Falls, Pa., all of which firms produce artistic tiling designs, suitable for solid wall decorations in all the leading styles, for libraries, dining-rooms and bathrooms.

There is also a chapter on architectural terra cotta, the most enduring of building materials, manufactured by the New York Terra Cotta Co., of Long Island City, and the Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Co., of New Jersey, and other establishments. This industry, which is not more than fifteen years old, has made wonderful progress, and to-day the United States excels the world in the manufacture of relief-figured tiles and tile panels. Of course, in the manufacture of ceramics, as well as that of other art products, we Americans have had the benefit of the skill and knowledge of the foremost artists of Europe, who have come to our shores; and we have also developed a number of American ceramists and sculptors, whose work is fully equal to the best that has yet been accomplished.

There is an unexplored field of decoration in the manufacture of American art tiles, and we must say that Mr. Barber's researches in this direction will impress the majority with the magnificence of the subject. Decorative tile panels are produced either in single tiles or by the union of two or more tiles, with subjects sculptured in low relief, and these appropriately framed form the most important decorative compositions. Panels, symbolic of the four seasons, pastoral scenes, portraits, cupids, symbolic figures, can be utilized for interior decoration. Ideal heads, modellings of children and female forms and designs after paintings are reproduced in tiles which are genuine works of art, and which are creditable alike to the designer, the manufacturer and the purchaser. Our American manufacturers have furnished us with many of these, which are worthy of a place in any home, and we are promised works of still higher art value in the near future.

## BOOKS

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## Architects, Artists, Designers and Decorators.

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